

COUNTY OF FRESNO
PROBATION DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION
ADULT SERVICES
INTERVIEWS AUGUST 17–18, 2000

Interview Process

On-site interviews with seven stakeholder groups were conducted in Fresno on August 17 and 18, 2000. The groups were divided into juvenile and adult services, except for the chief probation officer and senior staff and the county administrator's office staff, who participated in both juvenile and adult service discussions. The seven stakeholder groups were as follows:

1. Judges and court administrators
2. Chief probation officer and senior staff
3. Line supervisors and probation officers
4. Prosecutors and defense attorneys
5. County administrators
6. Public community agencies
7. Private community agencies

A total of 32 people were interviewed. This number included 3 judges and 2 court administrators, 3 senior probation managers, 9 first-line supervisors and line staff, 8 public and private agency representatives, 4 prosecutors and defense attorneys, and 3 staff members from the county administrator's office. The same questions were addressed by several stakeholder groups. Separate reports addressing juvenile and adult services have been prepared for Fresno County. Although many of the answers in both reports are the same or similar, the questions were addressed separately by both juvenile and adult services stakeholders. In some instances, contradictory responses were given. Areas of contradiction are reported under the questions to which they pertain.

Prior to the on-site interviews, several actions occurred. Eighteen categories related to juvenile and adult services were developed. Each category included several questions specific to that topic. These questions were discussed, modified, and clarified at a meeting with representatives from the six counties selected to be part of this process. To accommodate the time frames of this project, participating counties were asked to address the questions in writing and to provide as much information as possible prior to the actual interviews. *This report combines all responses and does not specifically identify the part of the justice system reporting.* The 18 categories are as follows:

- I. Demographic Information
- II. Organizational Structure
- III. Department Mission and Objectives
- IV. Policies and Procedures
- V. Monitoring and Evaluation Process
- VI. Management Information Systems
- VII. Funding Sources
- VIII. Probation Services
- IX. Specialized Court Services
- X. Probation and Private Service Provider Partnerships
- XI. Staff Development and Training
- XII. Communication Systems
- XIII. Program or Service Gaps
- XIV. Partnership with Judiciary
- XV. Partnership with Prosecutors and Defense Attorneys
- XVI. Partnership with Other Collaborative County Departments
- XVII. Juvenile Probation Partnership with Education System
- XVIII. Strengths of Probation Department

FRESNO COUNTY ADULT SERVICES DESCRIPTION

A total of 19 stakeholders addressed the questions related to adult services. The participant breakdown was as follows:

- One judge and one court administrator
- Three senior managers
- Five supervisors and probation officers
- One private community agency
- Three public community agencies
- Two prosecutors and defense attorneys
- Three representatives of the county supervisors and administrator's office

I. Demographic Information

A. Description of the county

Fresno County covers an area of approximately 6,000 square miles located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley. The main industry is agriculture. Fresno County produces the largest agricultural crop in the world, grossing \$3 billion annually. The county is diverse and includes urban, suburban, and rural areas. The total population is estimated to be 800,000. Approximately 450,000 live in the Fresno-Cover metropolitan area. About 25 percent of the population live in unincorporated areas

The median age for Fresno County residents is 30.1 years, compared with 33.1 years for California and 34.8 years for the nation. A large percentage of Fresno County's already young population is under the age of 19. Approximately 30 percent of the population are on some type of public assistance. Per capita

income is \$13,564, and 23 percent of all county residents live at or below poverty guidelines.

Fresno County's residents comprise one of the most diverse populations in California. In fact, Fresno County has the third most ethnically diverse population in the United States. The racial profile includes Caucasians (47.4 percent), Hispanics (36.6 percent), Asian/Pacific Islanders (9.9 percent), African Americans (4.7 percent), American Indians (1.0 percent), and others (0.3 percent). The Fresno Unified School District has 79,000 students speaking 105 different languages. Students report that their native tongue, rather than English, is the primary language used in the home. Twenty-seven percent of the total student body are LEP students.

B. Size of probation department

Fresno County has a total of 610 budgeted positions. Of these positions, 523 are full-time permanent, and 87 are paid with extra-help hours funds converted to cover full-time employee positions. The following is a breakdown of adult probation division positions:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| ▪ Probation division director | 1 position |
| ▪ Probation service managers | 6 positions |
| ▪ Deputy probation officers | 55.4 positions |
| ▪ Probation aides | 10 positions |
| ▪ Secretary | 1 position |
| ▪ Program techs | 2 positions |
| ▪ Honor release interviewer | 1 position |
| ▪ Senior job specialist | 1 position |
| ▪ Job specialists | 8 positions |
| ▪ Victim witness advocates | 12 positions |
| ▪ Student professional aide | 2 positions |

Total **99.4 positions**

C. Offender population, including types of offenses

- No information was received

II. Organizational Structure

A. History of structure

- Department was a four-division structure, each operating independently
- Changed to become an organization with clear lines of authority that blended all divisions

B. Theory behind organizational structure

- Desire to develop an organization with clear lines of authority
- Current structure calls for two deputy chief probation officers

C. Reporting lines of authority

- Four layers of management:
 - Chief
 - Deputy chief (not available in juvenile hall and camp structure)
 - Division director
 - Manager
- Same consistent line of authority in juvenile and adult divisions

D. Discuss organizational structure strengths

- In July 1999, the department was allocated one of the two deputy chief probation officer positions
- The addition of a second deputy chief probation officer is desirable

E. Suggested organizational changes

- Organizational structure is unbalanced at this point

- Needs to be reviewed if a second deputy chief probation officer is not authorized

III. Department Mission and Objectives

A. Written department mission statement

- There is a department mission statement that was written six to eight months ago

B. Written adult services mission statements

- There is no separate adult services mission statement
- Organization needs to focus on team building with a single mission

C. Written annual objectives for adult services

- Individual division directors have management objectives
- Line probation officers do not have annual objectives

D. Discuss staff involvement in the mission statement process

- Current mission statement was developed through a management team-building exercise
- Line probation officers were not involved in the process

E. Discuss how objectives are implemented within the department

- No annual objectives

IV. Policies and Procedures

A. Does the department have a policies and procedures manual?

How often is it revised?

- There is a department administrative manual
- Adult services does not have a working manual

- Department administrative manual is currently being revised

B. How are policies and procedures implemented?

- Through the chain of command
- Varies among management teams
- Policies are usually implemented as the result of a crisis
- Manuals will soon be on an intranet

C. Describe the process used to prepare policies

- Policies are developed at the request of the chief probation officer
- Executive staff prepares policies
- Usually, policies are developed at the occurrence of a crisis

D. Describe staff input in policy development

- Committees develop new policies
- Probation officers have an opportunity to volunteer to be on committees
- There is line staff input before policies are implemented
- Union reviews policies

E. Describe the process used to monitor policies and procedures

- Not being done
- Management checks to see if policies are updated
- Not everyone has a policies and procedures manual

V. Monitoring and Evaluation Process

A. Describe the evaluation procedures for programs and services

- Grant programs have evaluation components as a part of the award system
- All other programs have no evaluation component

B. Are evaluations designed on performance-based measures?

- No

C. Describe how monitoring and evaluation information is reported to the CPO

- CPO signs all grant-monitoring reports and corrective action plans
- CPO receives monthly caseload statistics

D. Describe how this information is integrated into programs and services

- No information

E. Describe how information from evaluations is integrated into management decisions

- No information

VI. Management Information Systems

A. Describe the current information system

- There is no management information system that encompasses the entire probation department
- A name index captures basic information
- There is a connection with the parole database
- Access to the prosecutor's STAR system is available

B. Assess the efficiency of the information system

- This system is rated as 45 to 50% efficient
- The adult system is fragmented and much less comprehensive than the juvenile system
- Information is not readily available

C. Describe how information needs are determined

- A needs assessment was completed by the local justice department several years ago
- Probation officers relay information needs to their managers
- Staff can go directly to information technology staff

D. Does a users committee exist and what is the composition?

- No committee exists in adult services
- Managers have direct access to information technology staff
- Probation officers are not included

E. Describe how the MIS interacts with other parts of the system

- Fragmented and not easy to access

F. Discuss additional information needs

- Better access to court information
- Statistical manual
- System that operates like JAS

G. What are the computer equipment needs?

- Updated equipment
- Laptops
- Computer capabilities in vehicles

VII. Funding Sources

A. What is the total budget (juvenile and adult breakdown)?

- The total budget for FY 1999–2000 was \$34,978,725
- The department breakdown of *actual* expenditures was as follows:
 - Adult probation \$5,642,451
 - Juvenile probation \$6,387,022
 - Juvenile institutions \$14,300,515

▪ Administration	\$7,545, 522
Total	\$33,875,511

B. What are your various funding sources?

- Fees
- Traffic and courts
- Federal
- State
- Other

C. Where are your greatest funding item deficits?

- Probation officer staff
- Facilities need upgrading
- Adult supervisors
- Additional resources for enhanced automation
- Additional office space

D. Level of CPO control over budget

- CPO has control over department budget
- CPO participates on county board committees

E. Large budget category comparisons for the past five years

- FY 1997: \$21,448,000 General fund: \$14,153,754 Other: \$7,294,246
- FY 1998: \$25,954,112 General fund: \$13,583,360 Other: \$12,370,751
- FY 1999: \$32,292,934 General fund: \$15,313,542 Other: \$16,979,392
- FY 2000: \$34,978,725 General fund: \$17,864,801 Other: \$17,113,924
- FY 2001: \$39,323,976 General fund: \$20,827,040 Other: \$18,496,936

Since fiscal year 1997, there has been an 83 percent increase in total budget revenue. The fiscal year 2001 budget includes 53 percent from general funds and 47 percent from other revenue sources. From fiscal year 1997 to 2001, the

percentage of general fund contributions to the probation department has decreased from 66 percent to 53 percent. During the same time period, money obtained from other revenue sources has increased 253 percent.

VIII. Probation Services

A. Discuss the automated and validated needs/risk tools being used

- No needs/risk assessments

B. Describe any specialized assessment services you provide

- None

C. What are the current probation supervision workload standards?

- Adult field services unit has reduced caseloads to 100 per officer
- Reduction in caseload size resulted because 6,800 cases were banked
- Grant caseloads have been reduced as a result of mandates
- There is no system of equal distribution of workloads among probation officers

D. Describe how these workload standards are determined

- Caseloads and staff available

E. Describe the case plan process (supervision plan)

- Conditions of probation are the plan
- Probation officers basically react to the behavior of probationers
- Plans are proactive in sex offender cases

F. Describe the continuum of services offered to probationers from least to most restrictive sanctions

- Diversion
- Deferred entry of judgment

- Conditional sentence (treatment counseling, community service, adult offender work program, work furlough/electronic monitoring, local jail commitment)
- Formal probation (supervision, drug court, domestic violence, inpatient drug treatment, counseling, adult offender work program restitution, work furlough/electronic monitoring, local jail commitment)
- State institution commitments (CYA, 90-day diagnostics, CRC, prison)

G. Are there eligibility criteria for entering and exiting each program and service? Please describe.

- Eligibility requirements are in place for specialized programs
- No eligibility criteria for regular cases
- Cases are assigned geographically

H. What sanctions along the continuum are *not* available?

- Treatment programs having waiting lists
- Additional custody beds
- Nonsecure and secure in-custody sex offender treatment programs
- In-custody mental health resources
- In-custody substance and alcohol abuse programs
- Work-furlough programs
- Manpower job development programs
- Space in local jails
- Warrant squad to locate missing probationers

I. Describe the role the judiciary plays in the intermediate sanctions system

- Judges understand probation resource limits
- Judges usually follow probation officer suggested sanctions
- Judges do not always agree with jail sentences
- Judges are more involved in drug court

J. What role does the judiciary play in determining the types of supervision sanctions needed?

- Usually agree with probation

K. Are there any mandated sanctions?

- Domestic violence cases have special conditions
- Child abuse cases have special conditions

IX. Specialized Court Services

A. List the specialized programs in your county

- Preconviction drug court
- Postconviction drug court
- Domestic violence court
- Sex offender program
- Fifty-two-week batterers program

B. Describe the relationship between these programs and probation

- All specialized courts have good working relationships with probation
- Judiciary supports the development of new programs
- No adversarial relationships exist with any partner
- Judiciary looks to probation for guidance
- All specialized programs have regular interdisciplinary meetings

X. Probation and Private Service Provider Partnerships

A. Describe the services private vendors provide to the probation department

- Electronic monitoring
- Drug testing lab
- Batterers program

B. How does probation staff view these services or programs?

- Probation must certify batterers program
- Probation evaluates drug programs
- There are very limited qualified private resources available
- Probation is reasonably satisfied with vendor performance
- Great working relationships with public agencies
- Probation is appreciative of services provided
- HEAT program has great relationship with probation

XI. Staff Development and Training

A. Describe the specific training subjects offered to staff

- Each new probation officer receives 240 hours of training from the state
- Each probation officer is required to have 40 hours of training annually
- Each institution worker is mandated to take 24 hours of annual training
- Each new supervisor and manager receives 80 hours of required training
- A department training manager chairs a training committee composed of line staff and managers

B. List the training courses that are mandatory

- CPR
- Field tactics
- Sexual harassment
- Peace officers are required to have annual firearms training

C. Describe how staff training needs are determined

- Training committee
- There is no training needs survey
- Some managers determine the training that their officers take
- E-mail classes are being offered

- Training officer is receptive to suggestions
- Field armed officers have limited time for electives

D. Describe the process used to get staff input for training needs

- Training committee
- Training officer informally solicits training suggestions from staff

E. Describe the types of cross-training taking place

- No cross-training

F. Describe the management training being offered

- Managers have received the same training as line staff
- In 2000, there is mandatory three-day training for managers
- After promotion, an 80-hour course is given to supervisors and managers
- Sixteen hours of training are required annually

XII. Communication Systems

A. Describe the department's staff meeting schedule

- Executive staff meets biweekly
- Department directors meet biweekly with their management staff
- Division chiefs do not meet with entire staff
- CPO has quarterly open meetings that all staff can attend
- Managers meet with their staff usually every two weeks

B. Describe the process used to disseminate day-to-day information to line staff

- E-mail
- Intranet
- Staff meetings
- Face-to-face interaction

- Monthly department newsletter

XIII. Program or Service Gaps

A. Discuss the resources, services, or programs you need to provide a more effective probation service

- Additional probation officer positions
- Increased salaries
- More custody services for sex offenders
- More in-patient mental health services
- More substance abuse residential treatment slots
- Additional custody beds
- Financial resources should accompany legislatively mandated services
- Need for police radios
- More collaboration with other agencies in rural areas
- Pretrial release information would be useful
- More supervision on misdemeanor cases
- More intensive supervision of certain felony offenders

B. Are any programs mandated?

- Domestic violence program
- Presentence investigation reports for convicted felony offender

XIV. Partnership with Judiciary

A. What services does probation provide for the judiciary?

- Pretrial reports
- Court officers in some courtrooms
- Presentence investigation reports
- Supervision services
- Victim services

- Violation reports
- Reviews
- Community program evaluations
- Staff drug courts
- Domestic violence
- Drug testing

B. Describe the relationship between the judiciary and probation department

- A good working relationship exists
- Overall, judges are very supportive
- Expertise of probation officers is recognized
- Having experienced probation officers in court enhances the relationship
- Judiciary relies on probation officer recommendations
- Inexperienced probation officers can be problematic

C. Describe the process used by probation and the judiciary to ensure that the judiciary has the broadest possible sentencing alternatives

- Managers in court services meet regularly with judges
- Division chiefs meet with judges
- Judges meet regularly with CPO
- Judges and probation prepare and react to position papers
- There is not much service outside of grant activities
- Exchange of e-mail
- Probation officers monitor and evaluate local treatment programs and provide written reports and evaluations to the judiciary
- Probation is included in judicial planning
- Probation oversight committee meets with the judiciary
- Judges train probation officers on new laws
- All criminal justice agencies need to meet regularly with the courts

D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve this partnership?

- Court officers are needed in all trial courts
- There are no services for misdemeanors
- Relationship looks excellent

XV. Partnership with Prosecutors and Defense Attorneys

A. What are the points of interaction among probation, prosecutors, and public defenders?

- Probation reviews prosecutor file
- Prosecutor and defense attorney get copies of presentence investigation report
- All parties discuss and see violation reports
- Defense attorney asks probation for its views on cases
- Probation performs drug evaluations and shares findings
- Prosecutor and defense attorney work with probation on special programs and services that involve multiple agencies
- Prosecution and defense attorney receive probation violation reports
- Probation conducts record checks

B. Describe the relationship among prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the probation department

- Prosecutor and defense attorney are approachable
- Defense attorney is willing to give information
- Prosecutor and defense attorney are not adversarial toward probation officers
- Probation views its role as an independent arm of the court
- The relationship is excellent
- Prosecutor pays attention to probation reports
- Probation has a tendency to lean slightly toward the prosecutor
- Some conflict with defense attorney
- Probation is seen to be on an equal footing with the prosecutor and defense attorney

- There is respect for one another's roles
- Probation stands up for its position; officers are not "yes men"

C. Discuss the exchange of information among probation, prosecutors, and defense attorneys

- Prosecution provides probation with actual working files
- Relationship between defense attorney and probation is usually nonadversarial

D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve the partnership?

- All parties need to work toward the same mission and goals
- Probation needs more officers
- Prosecutor operates more like a caretaker and is not a visionary
- All parties are doing well
- Extended assignment of prosecutor, defense attorney, and probation
- Prosecutor would be more inclined to recommend probation if more services were available

XVI. Partnership with Other Collaborative County Departments

A. What are the points of interaction with these departments?

- Interactions occur regularly with prosecutor, defense attorney, HHS, mental health, sheriff, and revenue reimbursement

B. Describe the relationship between probation and these departments

- Excellent working relationship
- Good partnership and collaborative attitudes
- Relationship with law enforcement is great
- Excellent relationship with HHS, DCFS, and county office of education
- Working collaboratively with state parole
- Interaction with these agencies is good because of a spirit of cooperation

C. Discuss the exchange of information between probation and these departments

- There was limited discussion, but information exchange appears to be satisfactory

D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve this collaborative relationship?

- More joint efforts with the sheriff's office
- Relationship would improve with more resources
- A good relationship exists with the board of supervisors
- Agencies are very cooperative when being reviewed by probation
- Probation usually takes the initiative for new interventions
- Creation of more team programs in the enforcement area
- More understanding of how other programs operate
- Plan social functions with other agencies
- Meet annually to discuss partnership enhancements

XVII. Strengths of Probation Department

A. List and discuss the elements of the probation department services that you believe are outstanding or exceptional

- School campus programs
- Juvenile Automation System (JAS)
- Challenge program (six-month juvenile prevention program)
- City and county partnership is excellent
- Good agency compatibility
- K-6 program (social services and mental health)
- Outstanding collaborative efforts with Magic (gang)
- Outstanding relationship with Help Eliminate Auto Theft (HEAT)
- Department adoption of 300 school children
- Department info-link newsletter

- Boot camp
- Excellent training for armed officers
- Excellent prevention programs
- Opportunities for advancement in the department are good
- Leadership of department is excellent
- Department has a clear vision
- Relationship between probation and other agencies is very positive
- Attitude of collaboration
- CPO communicates regularly with outside agencies
- Real commitment to intervention and early prevention
- Probation accepts judicial priorities
- Department staff is well educated
- Probation maintains a positive morale
- Relationship with judiciary in adult services is positive
- Probation is very inclusive
- :Probation officers respond quickly
- Probation officers have a balanced approach to the roles of law enforcement and social work
- Probation officers are expert at sentencing laws

